



Today, one-fifth of the world's population relies on freshwater that either is polluted or significantly overdrawn.

In 2005, the U.S. enacted Congressman Blumenauer's bipartisan "Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act," establishing the UN Millennium Development Goal's water and sanitation target as a major goal of US foreign assistance. This landmark legislation reaches millions of the world's poorest each year.

Although progress is being made through partnerships between the U.S. government, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and local partners, nearly one billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and more than two billion people live without improved sanitation. These conditions kill 1.8 million children under the age of 5 every year, more than from AIDS, TB and malaria combined.

The global population just passed 7 billion people, much of from the growth in Africa and Asia – the two regions of the world in greatest need when it comes to water and sanitation. We will not be able to sustain our rapidly growing population without making sustainable access to water and sanitation a top priority. This legislation will enable us to do more with less, and help projects have long-term impacts.

Solution

Given the scope of need and federal budget constraints, it is essential that we leverage innovation, partnerships, transparency and accountability to strengthen U.S. water and sanitation foreign assistance so we can reach the billions still in need.

[H.R. 3658, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2012](#) , drives our development assistance programs to provide a greater, more effective role in providing access to clean water and sanitation. Building upon the success of the 2005 Water for the Poor Act, this bill, enhances the capacity of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the State Department to play a greater, more effective role in development assistance as well as mitigate cross-border conflict. The bill:

- Codifies the existing position of the Global Water Coordinator within USAID to integrate and implement water strategies, and deliver aid more effectively;
- Elevates the existing position of the Special Advisor for Water Resources within the State Department to coordinate the diplomatic policy of the U.S. with respect to global freshwater issues;
- Increases the sustainability of water, sanitation and hygiene projects to ensure that our investments continue to provide benefits over the long-term;
- Increases country-ownership of water, sanitation and hygiene projects to ensure that our foreign assistance dollars meet the needs of poor local communities; and
- Increase transparency of aid and creating monitoring and evaluation standards that focus on impact to ensure USAID and the State Department can identify and utilize best-practices.

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